

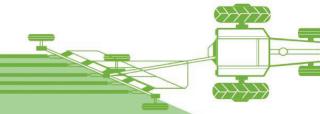
News Note

Breaking New Ground Outreach Program
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NEWS Note

A QUARTERLY LETTER TO FRIENDS OF THE BREAKING NEW GROUND OUTREACH PROGRAM/INDIANA AGRABILITY PROJECT

OVERCOMING ARTHRITIS TO CONTINUE FARMING

Questions? Contact Us!

www.breakingnewground.info

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Veteran Coordinator

Amber Wolfe-
Arthritis Foundation

Linda Tarr-
Hoosier Uplands

Mike Williams has worked on his family's farm in Sandborn, Indiana, his whole life and has never wanted to do anything else. He thought he might have to consider that possibility, though, when the aches and pains that he dismissed as part of farming got to the point that it was hard for him to get his work done.

A visit to the doctor revealed that Mike had three types of arthritis: psoriatic, rheumatoid, and osteoarthritis, which were causing his chronic pain. Years of hard work, lifting heavy loads, and hours in the tractor had taken a toll on his joints. The debilitating pain was effecting what he was able to do on the farm, but he never considered quitting.

Mike and his wife, Diann, contacted Indiana AgrAbility for options to allow Mike to continue farming. After meeting with the Williamses and conducting a farm assessment, Steve Swain of Indiana AgrAbility was able to make recommendations for assistive technology (AT) devices that could allow Mike to continue doing what he loves. Some of the devices recommended for Mike included a utility vehicle to help him get around the farm and take care of the cattle,



Photo: Tom Campbell

extended tractor steps and mirrors, bale forks and a hay accumulator to help feed the cattle, and automatic gate openers.

Steve then submitted his recommendations to Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VR) with a request to help Mike acquire this equipment. VR is often able to help by providing funding for equipment that will allow people like Mike to continue to farm.

According to Diann, "the help that AgrAbility and VR provided allowed Mike to be able to get out and do the things he wants to do. He feels like he's accomplishing something and that's the most important thing in the world."

Mike and Diann said they would "encourage anyone in a similar situation to reach out to AgrAbility and see how they can help; it can make a world of difference."

Cindy Chastain Joins AgrAbility to Enhance Outreach to Veterans



The National AgrAbility Project is happy to welcome Cindy Chastain to the new position of farmer veteran AgrAbility coordinator. In this capacity, Chastain will network with the 20 state and regional AgrAbility projects and other organizations to help with outreach to farmer veteran clients. She will also help plan and conduct AgrAbility's veterans' initiatives.

Chastain has a strong military background, and also has experience in agriculture. She grew up on a family farm in Crawfordsville and earned her bachelor's degree in animal sciences from Purdue, where she participated in the ROTC program. She then served as an Army officer for more than 31 years, including service as deputy commander of the 1-19th Agribusiness Development Team from 2008 to 2010, which was deployed to Afghanistan in 2009.

Since starting with AgrAbility on September 2, Chastain has already attended several conferences to share about veterans' issues and discuss how AgrAbility can help veterans with disabilities get into and succeed in agriculture.

Out & About with BNG

Fort Wayne Farm Show
Fort Wayne, IN
Jan 13-15

Indiana Rural Health Public Policy Forum
Indianapolis, IN
Jan 20

Indiana Horticulture Congress
Jan 20-22

National Farm Machinery Show
Feb 11-14
Louisville, KY

Midwest Women in Ag Conference
Merrillville, IN
Feb 18-19

Indiana Small Farm Conference
Danville, IN
March 5-7

GETTING TO KNOW EASTER SEALS CROSSROADS AND INDATA

Easter Seals Crossroads of Indianapolis has been helping individuals with disabilities and special needs and their families for over 75 years. It offers a variety of services tailored to meet the specific needs of the individuals they serve. These include autism programs, children's outpatient services, veterans' services, employment programs, disability services, and assistive technology initiatives.

Easter Seals Crossroads also houses the INdiana Assistive Technology Act (INDATA) Project. INDATA is one of 56 federally-funded projects that were created to increase access and awareness of assistive technology in each state and U.S. territory. Assistive technology (AT) refers to "any item, piece of equipment, or product system...that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the capabilities of individuals with disabilities" (Assistive Technology Act of 1998).

INDATA offers many services for people with disabilities. Funding assistance can be provided through low-interest, extended-rate loans for qualified individuals through the alternative financing program. AT devices such as hearing aids, Braille equipment, computers, and communication devices are available through this program.

If an individual only needs an AT device for a short term, he/she may



borrow it from the AT loan program. This helps the individual see if it will work for them before deciding to purchase a device. Available equipment includes devices for people with visual, cognitive, hearing, mobility, learning, and other impairments.

Consumers can also visit Easter Seals Crossroads to view a demonstration of the device they are considering purchasing. More than 2000 AT devices are available for demonstration.

INDATA also operates a computer and equipment reutilization program where they accept donated computers and AT devices that they sanitize, repair, wipe free of any stored data, and give away to Indiana individuals with disabilities free of charge.

Easter Seals Crossroads and the INDATA Project are valuable resources for Indiana residents with disabilities. In addition to the services listed above, they also provide information and referral services and public awareness and education programs. Staff also post a blog on assistive technology on their website, www.eastersealstech.com, produce two weekly podcasts that are also available on their website, operate www.AssistiveTechnologyRadio.com, and post weekly AT videos on their YouTube channel, <https://www.youtube.com/user/indataprojectESC>.

THE ANDERSONS CHARITY GOLF OUTING

The Andersons held its second annual Charity Golf Outing to benefit Indiana AgrAbility at the Tippecanoe Country Club in Monticello on June 26. More than 80 farmer customers of The Andersons attended, in addition to The Andersons employees and sponsors.

The event was a great success, raising \$6,000 from the farmers who participated in the event. This amount was matched by The Andersons. The \$12,000 donation will be used to provide travel stipends for Indiana farmers and their spouses/caregivers to attend the 2015 AgrAbility National Training Workshop in Rochester, New York.

Kylie Hendress was in attendance to set up an AgrAbility display and give a short presentation explaining how AgrAbility helps Indiana farmers with disabilities and their families.

Indiana AgrAbility greatly appreciates The Andersons' commitment to educating and helping farmers in Indiana and their continued support of AgrAbility.



Powered by a 29-hp gasoline engine, the Ripchair 3.0 Tracked Off-Road Wheelchair is a continuous-track vehicle that can be accessed via an onboard ramp and driven from a manual or power wheelchair. With zero-turn capability and cat-track propulsion, it can reportedly traverse rough terrain (including streams) and offers customizable options, including a lighting package, gun rack, and fishing rod holder.

NTW TRAVEL STIPENDS AVAILABLE

Would you like to attend the 2015 AgrAbility National Training Workshop (NTW) in Rochester, New York on April 13-16? If so, travel stipends are available for Indiana farmers and their spouses/caregivers.

These stipends cover the conference registration, hotel, and transportation costs, and are being sponsored by The Andersons from the proceeds donated to Indiana AgrAbility from their charity golf outing.

The NTW is the perfect place to meet other farmers/ranchers from around the country who are farming with a disability and making it work for them. Last year, 50 farmers/ranchers/caregivers were in attendance. We hope to exceed this number in 2015.

Attendees will have the opportunity to attend breakout sessions, off-site tours, and a banquet with a keynote address and auction.

Contact Kylie Hendress at khendres@purdue.edu for an application or visit www.agrability.org/ntw for more information.



The Toro Power Shovel is an electric snow thrower for use on sidewalks, driveways, and patios. It has a 7.5 amp motor that weighs in at 12.5 lbs. The Power Shovel has a plastic body, metal handle, broom accessory, key lock for safety, and two-year warranty. It can reportedly clear up to 300 pounds of 6-inch deep snow per minute.

Visit:
www.agrability.org/toolbox